

Serial No.: 09/367,423

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**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Please amend the above-identified application in the following manner.  
Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the following amendments and comments.

The amendments are made to place allowable subject matter in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this reply is considered proper since the amendments raise no new issues, do not require an additional search and/or place the application in a better condition for allowance and/or appeal. Entry of the reply is respectfully requested.

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**REMARKS**

*Allowable Subject Matter*

The Examiner has indicated that claims 105, 114-122, 133-137 and 142-144 have been allowed.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 126, 138, 140, 141, 146 and 147 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Each of claims 126, 138, 140, 141, 146 and 147 have been rewritten in this manner. In addition, independent claim 106 (from which claims 126, 138, 140 and 141 previously depended) and independent 145 (from which claims 146 and 147 previously depended) have been canceled. For consistency, claims 103 and 139 have been amended to depend from claim 138, and claim 104 has been canceled.

*Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102*

Claims 103, 104, 106, 139 and 145 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,246,456 to Inoue. To expedite prosecution of the application, claims 106 and 145 have been canceled, but their subject matter has been added to previously dependent claims that were indicated as being allowable. Also as indicated, the dependency of claims 103 and 139 has been amended and claim 104 has been canceled.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

*Conclusion*

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

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If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 18-0988, our Order No. LAMBIP0102WOUS.

Respectfully submitted,

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